

DDP

24 Jan. 63

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NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE ORGANIZATION

1. After 12 months of operation it appears that the NRO has failed to serve its intended purpose of providing for the management of aerial reconnaissance, manned aircraft and satellites, including ELINT satellites, in a manner which will meet the needs of all agencies carrying a responsibility in this area.

2. Several deficiencies are apparent to me, including:

a. The agreement does not provide for NRO authority over actual reconnaissance operations. This is evidenced by the fact that during the past year TACKLE flights over China and North Viet Nam have been planned and executed by CIA under Scoville to meet COMOR requirements with USIB and Special Group approval, but with no NRO direction. [redacted]

[redacted] The Cuban overflight program prior to October 14th was handled in this same manner; since October 14th it has been handled through SAC/JCS channels for scheduling and planning purposes with NRO, NPIC and CIA being informed after the plans had been completed. On the other hand, [redacted] flights over China are handled directly by JCS with the Special Group presumably using COMOR targeting but with little input or knowledge on the part of NRO, CIA or the intelligence community.

3. NRO responsibilities for programming and budgeting, and the related problem of management of authorized research and development and procurement including the control of appropriated funds, are not well established and are being handled under a compromise arrangement between Secretary McNamara, Secretary Gilpatric and me, with due consideration for differences with respect to the organizations, rather than a clear-cut understanding of a proper and satisfactory course of action.

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4. Responsibility for planning the future of reconnaissance, including new and improved satellites, aircraft, drones and the protection of existing satellites against Soviet anti-satellite efforts, is assigned to the NRO with the proviso that all NRO advanced planning be coordinated with CIA. I have been informed of little in the way of long-range plans, and therefore, I question whether a sound, aggressive, constructive, forward-looking problem is in the mill. The President's Intelligence Board has also raised this question several times.

5. There is poor linkage between NRO and USIB and, for that matter, DIA. This was abundantly clear when it became apparent that COMOR had not worked out a targeting plan for the first flight of LANYARD scheduled in February, and it developed that Dr. Charyk had ruled that, last summer, the COMOR Committee should not be briefed on the LANYARD program for security reasons and hence COMOR (with the exception of its Chairman) knew nothing of LANYARD until the 17th of January.

6. CIA is not a part of NRO except to the extent that it is Executive Agent for NRO programs such as OXCART. CIA representatives are not informed about NRO plans and programs beyond those for which they are responsible, even though these plans and programs may closely relate to those of CIA and obviously have a direct bearing on the DCI's responsibilities for insuring the adequacy of intelligence collection.

7. For all of these reasons I believe NRO should be reconsidered and a new form of organization worked out on the following lines:

a. NRO should be Executive Agent for a National Reconnaissance Plan (NRP), directed by SecDef and DCI jointly and for which both parties shall be responsible.

b. NRO should be directed by a DNRO, appointed by SecDef with the approval of DCI. He shall be responsible to SecDef, devote full time to NRO, and be located in the Pentagon. There should be appointed a Deputy DNRO selected from CIA who should be in the chain of command and serve as Acting DNRO in the absence of the Director. The Deputy DNRO should be fully and currently informed; should be responsible for the inter-relationship and liaison between NRO and USIB and its Subcommittees; should be Executive Agent for all NRO projects and operations carried out within CIA; and should recognize DNRO general responsibilities for all such projects.

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c. NRO should be responsible for all manned aircraft and satellite overflights over denied territory, both photographic and ELINT (but not including peripheral SIGINT operations) and should approve presentations to the Special Group where Special Group approval is required.

d. NRO should be responsible for the planning, research and development of future undertakings, utilizing the resources of military departments, CIA and appropriate contractors for such work. Such research and development should be aggressive, imaginative, and adequately supported.

8. NRO should have authority to employ the facilities of the Military Services, the Joint and Specified Commands and the CIA for execution of its plans and operations. The NRO, not the agencies, should be the final authority on all phases of NRO activities and operations.

9. NRO should be responsible for reconnaissance organization, its budgeting, the preparation of the budget and its defense. The manner in which black projects are to be handled before Committees of Congress should be determined and, if the House Appropriations Committee agrees to the proposed reorganization of their Committee structure, then it will no longer be necessary to compartment the "CIA black projects" and the DOD projects in the future as in the past.

10. The DCI is responsible for the security policy of the NRO as provided by law.

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